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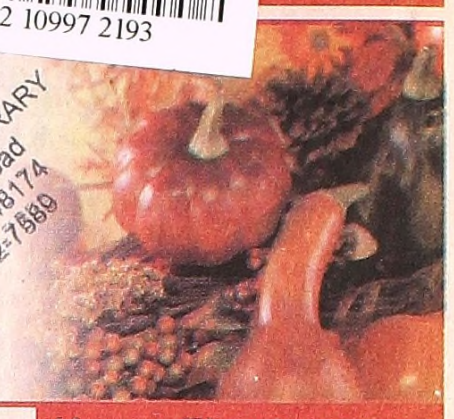

Happy Thanksgiving

News in brief

Airport officials offer holiday tips

The Wayne County Airport Authority asks that those flying for the holiday season remember some important tips, including:

Know your terminal. Metro now has two terminals: McNamara and North. A free shuttle connects the two terminals, as well as the Westin hotel, but it's best to know which terminal your airline serves before arriving at the airport.

Use the Cell Phone Lots. Take advantage of the airport cell phone waiting lots when picking up passengers. These free lots provide a convenient place close to the terminals for motorists to idle while waiting for their party to arrive. Arriving passengers can contact their ride from their cell phone after they have claimed their bags and are ready for pick-up at the curb. Maps for both cell phone waiting areas can be found under the "Maps & Directions" section of the airport website, www.metroairport.com.

Keep moving at the curb. Motorists are not allowed to idle at terminal curb fronts or along airport roadways. Terminal curb fronts are reserved for active loading and unloading of passengers only. Also, unattended vehicles at the curb—even if left for just a moment—are strictly prohibited and may be ticketed and towed.

Parking. Metro offers both long and short-term parking in covered parking decks attached to each terminal. Additionally, economy parking in the Yellow Lot is connected to both terminals by shuttle.

Arrive extra early. With parking lots, roadways and terminals expected to be busier than usual during the holiday travel periods, customers should allow extra time for parking, check-in/bag check and passenger screening.

Domestic departures: Plan to arrive at the airport at least 90 minutes prior to your scheduled departure time.

International departures: Plan to arrive at the airport at least 2 hours prior to your scheduled departure time.

Check-in online. Most airlines offer their passengers the ability to check-in, pre-pay luggage fees, and even select a seat for their flight via the airline Website within 24-hours of departure. Check-in online to save valuable time at the airport.

Keep your boarding pass and ID handy. Only passengers with a same-day boarding pass will be allowed through the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) passenger screening checkpoints. Passengers 18 years of age and older should be prepared to present a valid photo ID (such as a driver's license or passport) at the checkpoints and ticket counters. Special arrangements for passenger assistance can be made through your airline—contact your carrier directly for more information.

District will create new liquor licenses

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

To lure new business into downtown Romulus, the community is turning to spirits.

The Downtown Development Authority sought – and received – the support of the Romulus City Council Monday night to create a redevelopment district that would allow restaurant and tavern owners who wish to redevelop a vacant building to apply for the liquor license for $20,000 – a reduction from the $100,000 to $200,000 cost for an on-premises license.

Maria Lambert, the director of the authority, called the redevelopment district another tool to attempt to lure more business into the struggling downtown.

"We have had at least one business owner express interest in the reduced-cost license," she said. "This is one way we can try to get people to open a business in the city that aren't here."

Though the five members of council who attended the study session had questions, few were ambivalent about the plan, even though it could increase the number of liquor licenses in the city.

"Ultimately I think this could be a good thing," said Councilman William Crova. "It's another way we can get more businesses into downtown."

Public Act 501 of 2006 allows municipalities to apply to the Liquor Control Commission to create the redevelopment district, but as a requirement, communities must show there is support for such a plan by providing a majority resolution to create the district.

The law was enacted to help local cities and townships create new opportunities for increased revenues, foot traffic, and revitalization that restaurants and taverns provide.

The law mandates that liquor license applicants own a business that is engaged in dining, entertainment or recreation – cutting out retailers such as party stores. Applicants must have capacity in their buildings for at least 50 persons, and remain open to the public for at least 10 hours, five days per week.

Significant reinvestment is also a requirement. Private and public investment must equal at least $200,000 for the preceding five years for an applicant to be eligible for the low-cost license.

The redevelopment districts must also be located in a designated Downtown Development or Tax Increment Financing Authority district.

See **License,** page 4

Santa's here

The annual Tree Lighting Ceremony took place Friday with Mayor Alan Lambert lighting the official city Christmas tree at Romulus Historical Park. During the ceremony, officials and residents also welcomed Santa Claus and provided him with a key to the city. The historic Kingsley House was open to guests, and Santa jotted down Christmas wishes of many children in attendance. Above, Robert Rhinehart visits with Santa, along with Tyler Foster, right, who was out and about with dad Joe Mabelitini.

7 buildings will be demolished

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

What is likely to be the final list of demolitions proposed to city council members was approved Monday night during a public hearing in Romulus.

City officials opted not to dispute Building Manager Robert McCriaght's recommendation that seven uninhabitable commercial and residential structures be demolished because of safety issues, and a lack of feedback from property owners.

"This year, we've torn down about 24 buildings in the city," he said.

"Often times, the property owners agree to bring the buildings up to code, but when they don't, we don't really have a choice but to tear them down."

The addresses of the building that will face the wrecking ball include 29535 Ecorse Road, 10301 Miriam and 35963 Herman – all of which are residential homes with extensive fire damage – 29057 Hildebrandt, 10216 Loraine and 29064 Lorman – each of which are six-unit apartment structures that served as U.S. Army barracks at one time.

Of the property owners invited to plead their case at the hearing, only the owners of the Hildebrandt location took part in the meeting.

The owner – who did not provide his name for the record – said he was unable to keep an earlier promise to the city to rehabilitate the building because asbestos removal proved to be more complicated than he expected. The owner did not dispute the intent of the city to demolish the structure.

The owner of the home on Herman gave the Romulus Fire Department authorization to use the home for training drills before it is demolished, McCraight said.

Demolishing buildings can be a long process for the city. Property owners have 20 days after the council resolves to remove an unsightly building to get an injunction against the city, prohibiting demolition until a judge can issue a ruling.

McCraight said its seldom the city has to go to court.

See **Buildings,** page 4

Crout may seek mayor's spot

Andrea King
Staff Writer

A council member is considering seeking the top city job next year.

Harry Crout, who was elected to the city council for the first time three years ago, said he is debating a run for the mayor's office, and said he will make a final announcement regarding a candidacy by January.

"If I do run, it will be for change in this community," said Crout. "We need to do things differently – there's too much money being spent at the top, and we need to work harder to attract new kinds of business to the community.

"The money that is currently being misspent should go back to the general fund, and back to the taxpayers. If I run, I will never forget that I work for the people," he said.

> *With the economy the way it is, we have to find a way to reduce taxes on the people.*
>
> **Harry Crout**

Taxes would figure prominently in any candidacy, said Crout.

"I hear all of the time that taxes are too high here," he said. "With the economy the way it is, we have to find a way to reduce taxes on the people."

Crout – if he runs – would be the second official to announce a candidacy for mayor. The current mayor, Alan Lambert, announced he would seek a third, four-year term.

Lambert said he's in good shape for a third candidacy.

"I believe people are happy with the way things are going here," he

See **Election,** page 4

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Van Buren Economic Development Director resigns

Andrea King
Staff Writer

Bryce Kelley, the director of planning and economic development for Van Buren Township, has resigned to move on to new opportunities.

"Americans are raised to be individuals that are measured by what we do as individuals and the measurement of the leadership of you (township officials) is obvious and can be demonstrated," said Kelley. "Doors were opened and so I'm resigning."

Kelley announced his resignation at the regular meeting of the board last week. His last day on the job was Nov. 19. Dan Swallow, the deputy director of planning and economic development, will continue in his role.

"It's a good time to leave with the board transition and there's a lot of opportunities out there I want to chase," he said. "I'm not at the point where I can say where I'm going."

Kelley thanked the community and staff of Van Buren Township.

"I first came here in February 1996," he said. "The department of development is excellent and has been with me so I thank you. Others have been a function of strength of leadership and it's been easy to work for all of you.

"Every one of you is my relative," he added. "I've easily connected and been able to talk with the Van Buren community, like family, so thank you for that, too. I'm also going to be a grandparent so that's exciting."

Other departing board members also said goodbye during their last meeting serving on the township board. Lianne Clair said it's been a rewarding learning experience, while Joannie Payne thanked the community for letting her serve for the past 25 years.

"It's a team effort; we all work together," said Former Supervisor Cindy King. "These folks all realize they're here for the greater good and they have regard and respect for their work.

"If I was going to an organization where I was told I could hire a dozen people, I'd hire all of you (directors)," she added with tears in her eyes. "It's been a privilege to work with the board and I don't think many people get to work with people that your kids call grandma (Sharry Budd) and your best friend (Joannie Payne). It doesn't happen all the time. We're all here for the community and I wish all the new members well in this endeavor because it's about service to the community and tough choices."

Officials also had the first public hearing on the proposed 2009 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. About $135,00 is estimated to go toward: the senior director wages, the transportation coordinator, a senior center administrative intern, a telephone reassurance staff person, office area additions for senior services, the 'Takin it to the Streets' parks and recreation program, youth instructions and activities, the physical fitness area for youth/closet rebuilding, demolition and planning and administration.

Township trustees also approved a new identity theft prevention policy and the extension of winter tax collections until Feb. 28.

Former Clerk Joannie Payne swears in the new members of police and fire: David Champagne and Chris Hull.

Township welcomes new officers

Van Buren Township recently hired two new employees—David Champagne and Chris Hull—to join the Van Buren Township Public Safety Department. Champagne was hired as a full time police officer. He has been employed in the township as a paid-on-call firefighter since 2002. He is also a certified emergency medical technician and a member of the training staff for new firefighters.

Champagne was previously employed as a quality supervisor at Steel Technologies in Canton Township. He graduated number 11 out of 34 recruits for the Wayne County Regional Police Academy. In addition, Champagne received the 'Top Driver' award in defensive driving class.

Hull was hired as a paid-on-call firefighter. He is a graduate of the fire technology program at Schoolcraft College, where he has been certified in the firefighter 1 and 2 programs. He currently works part time as a physical training instructor at the Fire Academy.

Hull is a veteran of the U.S. Army, served in Germany and was promoted to the rank of sergeant while serving as an assistant team leader in the airborne unit. Hull was also a member of the long-range surveillance and reconnaissance unit for three deployments to Bosnia. He also served in Albania during the Kosovo war.

Hull has received training in rescue, extrication, survival and leadership and, was awarded five Army medals, a commemoration medal and a good conduct medal.

CITY OF ROMULUS
NOTICE OF
Public Hearing and Proposed Program Statement
For the FY 2009/2010
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
(CDBG) PROGRAM

Pursuant to federal guidelines, the City of Romulus is scheduling a Public Hearing on Monday, ***December 22, 2008*** for the purpose of receiving comments or suggestions regarding projects for the fiscal year 2009/2010 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) Program. The CITY OF ROMULUS expects to receive an **estimated** $240,000 plus an additional $30,000 for Housing Rehabilitation.

The primary objectives of the Federal HUD CDBG program are to assist low to moderate income families directly or to provide benefits in areas where 51% of the residents are low to moderate income, such as replacing the urban infrastructure of streets, improve recreational facilities and programs and assist in meeting special needs of the elderly and physically disabled.

The following projects, subject to the Public Hearing Process, have been proposed and will meet HUD objectives by benefiting low and moderate-income families, preserving deteriorating housing stock and enhancing parks and public facilities.

2009 Proposed Projects

ACTIVITY/Location:	Estimated CDBG ALLOCATION:	* From Program Income:	
Senior Services - *Citywide* 36525 Bibbins Chore/minor home repair services, Transportation, education, Recreation & staffing	$33,125		
Senior Minor Home Repair- *Citywide* 36525 Bibbins minor home repair services,	$1,875		
Senior Center - Partial Bond Payment 36525 Bibbins, Romulus, MI 48174 Year six of a ten year pre-commitment of the City of Romulus CDBG allocation to pay for the $3.4 mil bonded construction. CDBG funds were pre-committed until 2013 (with an estimated reduced allocation of 5% annually)	$205,000 $240,400	*$35,400	T.
Administration (10%)	$ 0 $240,000.00	$ 0	*$35,400
Housing Rehabilitation	30,000.00		
TOTAL *ESTIMATED* Allocation:	$270,000.00		

*In addition, the city anticipates receiving approximately $35,400 in Program Income received through repayment of housing rehabilitation liens, to be used for additional senior center bond payment and emergency housing rehabilitations if additional funds are received.

The City of Romulus will also apply for $30,000 to continue the housing rehabilitation program, as indicated above.

All interested parties, organizations, agencies or individuals are invited to submit a "Request for Funding" or comment on the Proposed Projects at, or prior to, the Public Hearing. For further information, contact the Economic Development Department, City of Romulus, 11111 Wayne Road, Romulus, MI 48174.

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Suspect arrested in elderly woman's death

Andrea King
Staff Writer

Michael Scott Bush, 25, of Sumpter Township, has been charged with felony murder and arson in the death of Frances Cothern of Van Buren Township.

Scott was arraigned last week and is being held without bail in the Wayne County Jail until his Dec. 3 court date.

According to Van Buren Township police, the fire on Bemis Road was linked to several events, including break-ins, burglaries and drugs around the township, which eventually led to the death of Cothern.

"I think the intent was to get cash and drugs," said Capt. Greg Laurain of the Van Buren Township Public Safety Department.

About an hour before the fire started, police received a call about a suspicious person in the area. The resident said the person wanted to come inside their house to use the phone. He (the suspect) kept insisting he wanted to come in, Laurain said, because he told the resident he ran out of gas in his car. However, once police arrived, there was no broken down vehicle, officials said.

"By the time police got there, the man was gone," said Laurain.

At about 8:30 that same night, a call from a neighbor came in about the house fire, along with a third call about a barricaded gunman in a trailer park, according to reports.

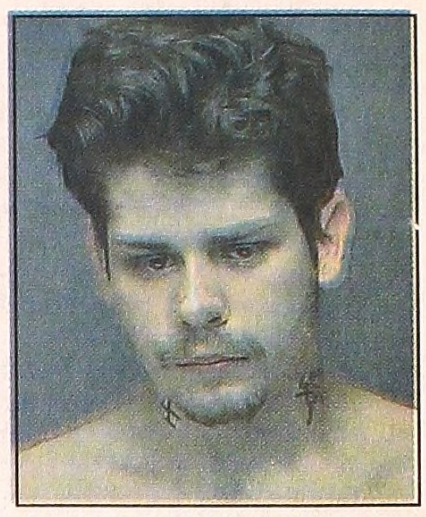
"We were told that the suspect told the residents that he had just robbed a woman on Bemis Road and set the house on fire," Laurain said. "The residents called the police and said the suspect was still in the home walking around with a long gun."

The Special Weapons and Tactical Team (SWAT) was called in and the suspect was arrested.

Officials also found the long gun inside the home, along with money, missing jewelry and a prescription pill bottle, Laurain said.

"The name (Cothern's) and address on the bottle came back to the house on fire on Bemis Road," he said. "The gun recovered and found appears to be stolen from a breaking and entering in Sumpter, as well."

Cothern, 89, was deceased by the time fire officials arrived on the scene, according to reports.



Michel Scott Bush

Oath of office

New members of the Sumpter Township Board of Trustees were sworn into office recently by Chief Judge Tina Brooks Green of the 34th District Court in Romulus, including: Deputy Clerk Esther Hurst, Trustee Bill Hamm, Trustee Linda Kennedy, Clerk Clarence Hoffman Jr., Supervisor Johnny Vawters, Treasurer John Morgan, Trustee Peggy Morgan, Trustee Alan Bates, Deputy Treasurer Karen Armatis and Deputy Supervisor Craig Moody.

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TWILIGHT (PG-13) 11:00, 1:00, 1:40, 3:40, 4:20, 6:20, 7:00, 9:00, 9:40 FRI/SAT LS 11:40
BOLT (PG) 11:30, 1:45, 4:00, 6:30, 8:45
BOLT DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (PG)
12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:25
FRI/SAT LS 11:35
MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2 AFRICA (PG)
FRI-TUE, TH 11:05, 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30
FRI/SAT LS 11:35
WED 11:05, 1:10, 3:15
ROLE MODELS (R) FRI/SAT LS 11:00

World wrestlers to visit area

Meghan Chatham
Staff Writer

On Dec. 14, professional wrestlers will showcase their skills in Westland to help bring smiles to the faces of children.

Sponsored by Wolverine Pro Wrestling, the event will feature a variety of wrestlers who are volunteering their services for the event including World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) performer and Livonia native Zach Gowen, 'Doink the Clown', Jeff Brooks, 'Nacho Libre', Jeff King, and 'Ringside Revue'. Individuals in attendance will be asked to donate one or more gifts to Toys for Tots in order to generate the toys necessary to help the children of Michigan military families have a brighter holiday season.

According to Lee Tracy, owner of Wolverine Pro Wrestling, the match was a natural fit for the group.

> *It's all very family-friendly. My own kids will be there.*
>
> **Lee Tracy**

"We appreciate everything the soldiers here in Michigan have done for us and our children," he said. "We're just trying to brighten the holidays for kids whose holidays might not be very bright."

He encouraged all residents to stop by and check out the action.

"It's a great family atmosphere," he said. "Some parents are kind of offish about professional wrestling because of what they see on television. We don't get into that. It's all very family-friendly. My own kids will be there."

After the matches are completed, all of the toys collected will be given to a representative of the United States Marine Corps recruiting office in Westland, who will transport them to Selfridge Air National Guard Base near Mount Clemens. From there, the toys will be distributed to qualifying area military families this holiday season as part of the Toys for Tots program.

Tickets for the event will be available at the door. Admission for adults is $10 plus a toy while admission for children age 13 or younger is $5 plus a toy. .

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with bell time at 6 p.m. Skateland West is located at 37550 Cherry Hill Road, just west of Newburgh Road in Westland. The event is offered in conjunction with the Fallen and Wounded Soldiers of Michigan Fund and Toys for Tots.

For more information, visit the web site www.myspace.com/wolverineprowrestling.

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Held back

Early 5 school program postponed

Andrea King
Staff Writer

Van Buren School District offiicals have decided to postpone the start of the Early Fives program.

Members of the board of education voted recently to table the early kindergarten program for more study and discussion. The motion to table was approved by a 4 to 3 vote with Trustees Bob Binert, Ralph Nodwell and Keith Johnston voting dissenting.

Peggy Voigt, elementary curriculum supervisor for the Van Buren Public School District, requested the program start in January pending the registration of the required number of students. If the required number was not reached, registrations could be accepted for the fall 2009 semester.

> *We need to really think about it and, we haven't really heard the benefits of it (the program).*
>
> **Tori Hunt**

Voigt estimated it would take about 24 students to cover expenses.

Board President Dave Peer said, "If the district picks up children they don't already have than that's more revenue to the schools." Trustee Martha Toth said, as a parent, she would want a half-time program.

"I fear that a lot of time and effort will be put in this and then we don't get anyone for it," she said.

Trustee Toni Hunt agreed.

"I worry we're not providing services to those kids, we're getting revenue, we shouldn't be looking at this as dollars. I'm not comfortable with this," she said.

Superintendent Larry Tabor said the program is an opportunity for some parents who feel their children aren't ready for the kindergarten program. Perhaps the district should be looking at a minimum, he said, but if they're looking at providing a service then maybe it's also an opportunity to bring in some revenue.

"If that were true, then why did we just go through staff cuts and program cuts," said Peer. "The education may be a good idea, but over the next few months we're going to be making decisions that aren't 'education' ones, like we've already done."

Hunt said she felt it was best to table the decision.

"We need to really think about it and, we haven't really heard the benefits of it (the program)," she said. "Why did we eliminate it in the first place? How are we going to recess it? We need to look at the data because it's not just about dollars and cents, it's about a quality program. This would give us more time to evaluate and I'm not comfortable doing this (program) in January."

Surrounding school districts, like Huron and the Wayne-Westland Community Schools, currently have an early fives program.

"I worry we would be creating a liability for us now because I'm not sure we can predict that outcome," said Toth.

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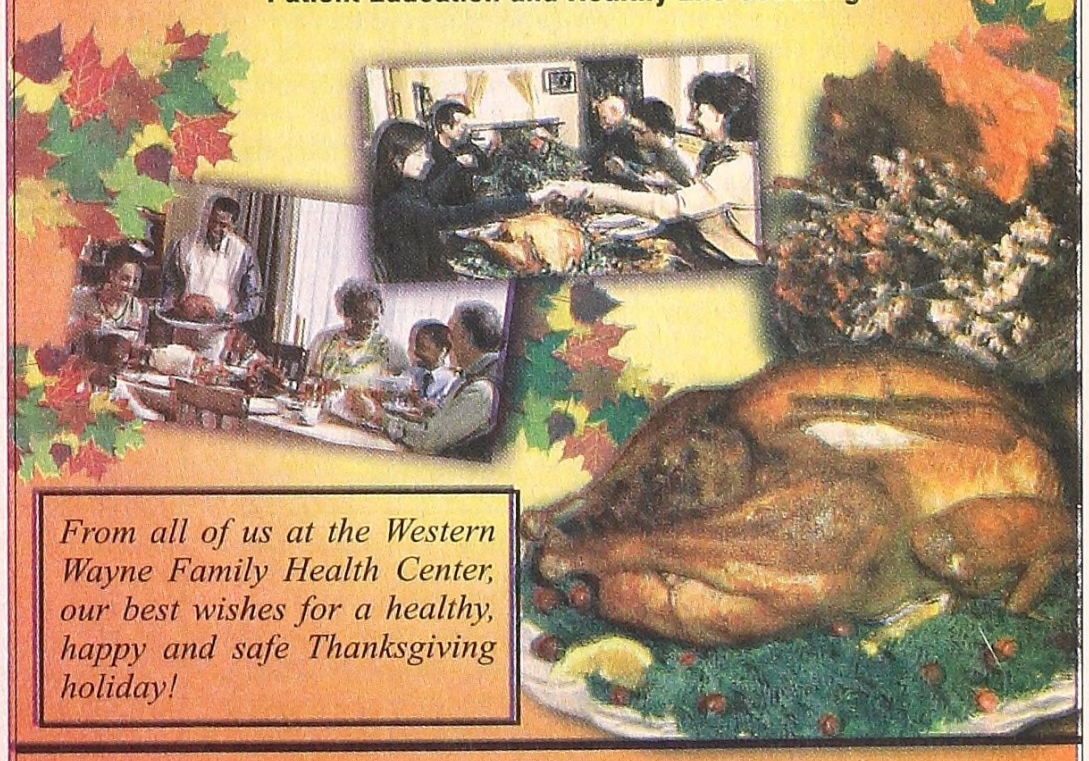
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Bad weather plans for city, county in place

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

Changes in road services slated by the Wayne County Department of Public Services have some residents and officials questioning whether local and county roads will be passable for Romulus residents in the event of heavier-than-expected snowfall.

The short answer is yes, said Tom Wilson, the supervisor of the Romulus Department of Public Works.

"We have a plan that will ensure the roads are taken care of, and my staff and the DPS workers have really embraced it," he said.

Wilson said he can't plow county roads – even it if may take longer for the county department to plow and salt those roadways.

"The county is responsible for those roads, and I can't – nor am I expected – to take those on," he said. "We're not allowed to salt their roads because we can't take on the liability."

County cutbacks

The Wayne County Department of Public Services recently conducted two community meetings to address changes in how it conducts snow removal. Several local public works directors attended the meeting.

James A. Jackson, the director of Wayne County Department of Public Services, said county roads – Merriman, Inkster, Middlebelt, Van Born, Hannan, Ecorse and part of Goddard in Romulus – may take longer to open up in a snow event because of less funding for supplies, and layoffs due to budget constraints.

"We have not been in a position to purchase any new equipment, and as a result our fleet (of winter maintenance vehicles) will reduce from 155 units available last season to somewhere near 140 units this year," he said in a statement.

"We have had to reduce our plow and salting routes from 133 routes last year - and in years past to 99 routes this season," Jackson said. "And as a result it will take longer to clear each route just based on the fact that the route sizes have increased."

> *We have had to reduce our plow and salting routes from 133 routes last year - and in years past to 99 routes this season.*
>
> **James A. Jackson**

The state economy has exacted a toll on the county roads division, which is responsible for maintaining most of the heavily traveled, main roads in western Wayne County.

Last year, heavy winters and increases in costs associated with overtime and material costs forced 31 personnel layoffs. During the past four years, the roads division alone lost 200 full-time and 200 seasonal staff members as well, according to numbers provided by the county.

The new county strategy moves away from the traditional salt-and-melt method used previously. Whereas previously the department would salt until snow and ice melted, a "plow and salt" strategy means the roads will be completely plowed, and then salted. This allows the county to save on the cost of salt, but is more time-consuming.

City has a plan

Wilson said the city would use a different strategy that proved to be beneficial last year.

"We will use brine on the roads to pre-wet the surfaces," he said. "The pre-wetting prevents snow and ice from adhering to roads, which means we use less salt. The plan saved about $70,000 last year."

The city shares brine mixers with the City of Wayne, which also saves money.

The same number of trucks and employees will hit the streets this year as last, said Wilson, but officials have made no secret of the fact they are hoping for an inactive winter.

"Everyone is concerned about budgets," he said. "It would be kind of hard, if the snow begins at night or very early in the morning, to have everything plowed before people get up to go to work," Wilson said. "But I would put my people up to anyone's else's in terms of making that happen."

— Staff Writer Meghan Chatham contributed to this report.

Calendar of events

Goodfellows seeking applicants

The Romulus Goodfellows are accepting applications for the "No Child Without A Chrsitmas" campaign through Dec. 5.

Applications are available for Romulus residents only at Romulus City Hall, 11111 Wayne Road or Romulus Fire Station #4, 28777 Eureka Road during the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., and Romulus Senior Citizens at 36525 Bibbins.

To find out more about qualifying for the program, call (734)955-4577.

Fall book club announced

The Second Monday Book Club will continue book discussions throughout the winter months.

The book club meets from 7 until 8:15 p.m. the second Monday of each month to discuss various books at the library.

Selections include: *Death of Ivan Ilyich* by Leo Tolstoy, which will be discussed Dec. 8; *American Detective: An Amos Walker Mystery* by Loren D.Estleman, which will be discussed Jan. 12; *Ladies of Liberty* by Cokie Roberts, which will be discussed Feb. 9; *Thief of Souls* by Ann Benson, which will be discussed March 9 and *Anatomy of a Murder* by Robert Traver, which will be discussed April 13.

Book discussions are free and open to all age 18 and up. Readers need not register in advance.

The library will have copies of the books, or will assist participants in obtaining an inter-library loan copy.

The Romulus Library is located at 11121 Wayne Road, next door to the Romulus City Hall facility.

For more information, call the library at (734) 941-3575.

Flu shots offered

Sav-On Drug stores throughout metro Detroit will have flu clinics during December. Flu shots are $25 this year, and pneumonia shots will be offered for $35.

Payment options include cash, check and credit card, as well Medicare and medical insurances.

The clinics are open to the public for people 14 and older. For a weekly listing of flu clinics, visit flushotcalendar.com or call 1-877-SAV ON 2 U (877-728-6628.)

Clinics are scheduled at the Sav-On Family Pharmacy at 36567 Goddard Road.

For more information, call (734) 941-0755.

— Events are compiled by Staff Writer Molly Tippen.

'Angel' will return to Belleville

Andrea King
Staff Writer

The Angel of Hope ceremony will return next week to honor lost loved ones in time for the holidays.

The candlelight observance will take place at 7 p.m. on Dec. 6 at the Hillside Cemetery on Denton Road in Belleville. The service is dedicated in honor the memory of the beloved and greatly missed deceased, according to Mary Martinez, grief management coordinator for the David C Brown Funeral Home and Brown Family Center, sponsors of the event.

"It's important for us to do each year for those people who have lost children," said Kathie Steigerwald, pre-need consultant at the funeral home and center, along with co-organizer of the event.

The Angel of Hope was brought to Belleville by Martha Brown. She generated the funds to do so in 2002 and has since hosted the ceremony to help people grieve and heal, according to Steigerwald.

The Angel of Hope is also known as the Christmas Box Angel Statue, which was first introduced in the book The Christmas Box by Richard Paul Evans. In the book, a woman mourns the loss of her child at the base of an angel monument. A new angel statue was commissioned by Evans. Now, all 4-foot, 3-inch tall Angel of Hope monuments throughout the country host a candlelight healing ceremony each year on this day, which is celebrated as 'Children's Day' in many parts of the world, according to organizers.

At the ceremony, names of children will be read, along with a prayer from Pastor Jim Walker of the First United Methodist Church. Candles, flowers and hot chocolate will be provided during the dedication.

Those who would like to have a child's name read out loud during the ceremony can call the funeral home.

The Brown Funeral Home and Family Center will also host the fourth annual Belleville Tree of Remembrance ceremony on Dec. 1. The open house will start with refreshments at 6:30 p.m. and a memorial service will follow at 7 p.m. outside the center to include an opening prayer by Pastor Bob White of the Grace Baptist Church.

"It's to show the community we support them and if we can help them in any way," said Steigerwald. "The holidays are a hard time of year."

Harvey and Elaine Stabnaw of Belleville will donate the tree in honor of their niece, Alex, who died from cancer in 1998.

"We're going to put a bulb on the tree in her (Alex') name," said Elaine Stabnaw. "This year we thought we would give the tree outside our home entranceway to the funeral home."

People can also bring a weather-proof ornament to place on the tree during the ceremony in honor of a loved one. Those who are unable to attend the service and would like an ornament on the tree can place one there any time after Dec. 1.

For more information about either event, contact Martinez or Steigerwald at (734) 697-5090. The center also has free grief support care available throughout the year.

Woman charged in fire, death

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

A 63-year-old Inkster woman will face murder charges stemming from an arson at the home of her ex-boyfriend which claimed the life of his new girlfriend.

The fire, at 28000 block of Rosewood Street, claimed the life of homeowner Larry Lee's 52-year-old girlfriend, Denise Robinson, who was overcome by smoke in the upstairs bedroom, according to reports.

Zilpah Ann Warmack was charged with one count of felony murder, one count of assault with intent to murder, and an additional count of arson Wednesday at the 22nd District Court in Inkster.

The felony murder charge carries a mandatory life sentence behind bars, the assault charge carries a penalty of any number of years in prison up to life, and arson is punishable by 20 years in prison.

Judge Sylvia A. James ordered Warmack held at the Wayne County Jail in lieu of $500,000 bond, and ordered Warmack to stay away from Lee, the homeowner. She also entered a plea of not guilty on Warmack's behalf.

The incident that led to the charges against Warmack occurred in the early morning hours of Monday, Nov. 17. Residents who live in the vicinity of the home at 28227 Rosewood called 911 to report flames were spouting from the home at about 5:30 a.m., according to fire reports.

When firefighters and police arrived on the scene, Lee reported that Robinson was still inside the home, and that he was unable to get her out. Robinson died at the scene.

An arson investigation was opened, and it was determined that gasoline was poured on the front porch, where the fire burned hottest.

A police investigation determined, through witness statements and other evidence, that Warmack allegedly was responsible for starting the fire. Warmack was taken into custody hours after the fire.

On the day of the fire, shocked residents were in disbelief about Robinson's fate, and the crime of which Warmack stands accused.

"I can't believe anything like this would happen in our neighborhood – everyone was family here," said Kristina Hamilton, 20, who lived in the community for several years.

Hamilton, who said she had dated the victim's son, said Robinson had told her she felt the suspect was stalking her.

"I received a text message that she had been murdered, and I'm shocked. She was such a nice woman – and she said she was going to file a police report (about the stalking)."

Robinson was employed in the healthcare field, and lived in a home near Lee's, neighbors said.

Warmack's relatives also made statements to the media Nov. 17.

"It's easy for people to assign blame," said Troy Garrison, 44. "She hasn't gone out with him for two years, and she's innocent."

Lee received minor injuries during the fire, and was taken to an area hospital for treatment, according to incident reports.

Warmack will return to the 22nd District Court Dec 3 for a pre-trial examination to determine if there is enough evidence to send her to trial.

License

FROM PAGE 1

If a business fails, licenses must be transferred within the district.

Local officials would retain control of granting licenses, and the current city processes would remain intact.

"Applicants would still have to seek approval from the council, so there's not much that will be given up," Lambert said.

One thought that did occur to authority members and city officials is whether the move could attract unwanted adult entertainment establishments.

Crova said that is unlikely.

"Adult establishments have to seek a dancing license, which is different," he said, adding that its unlikely the council would want to grant a dance license under any circumstances.

The overall economy has been a brutal one on taverns and restaurants, but officials feel that the more freedom – and the low cost of the liquor licenses, may lure more entrepreneurs.

The downtown area has taken some hits during the past few years. The Secretary of State office closed, which reduced foot traffic significantly, said Councilman William Wadsworth.

Also, there is only establishment in the downtown area – the Landing Strip – that serves alcohol.

"If this is something that they feel may increase their chances of succeeding, we should try it," Crova said. "I'm sure that a lot of us remember when there's was more down there, like a movie theater."

Lambert said she has high hopes for the new district, even in the face of a difficult economy.

"Many downtowns that are busier than ours are having difficulty, even though we tend to think it's just ours," she said.

"A lot of effort goes into attracting business into downtown," Lambert added. "This will be one more thing we can offer."

Buildings

FROM PAGE 1

"We had to go to court one or two times last year," he said.

On the upside, residents seem to be more willing to fix unloved structures.

"I had one guy fix up an abandoned home so his daughter could live there," he said.

Residents typically don't incur demolition costs, which are billed to the property owner. If the bill is unpaid, its added to the property owner's tax assessment.

The building department will now prepare bid specifications to hire a vendor to demolish the structures.

Watch for daily news updates on our website www.journalgroup.com

Election

FROM PAGE 1

said. "When you look at other cities, they have laid people off, there have been reductions in services . . . . none of that has happened here.

"I think voters recognize that, and will come out for me on Election Day," Lambert said.

Crout is a retired autoworker. His wife, Sandra, is currently a member of the Romulus School Board.

Crout has been an outspoken opponent of some initiatives the city has put into place that were supported by Lambert, including making changes to the city pension system that placed restrictions on pension withdrawals, and raises for top city officials.

Romulus has seen a few disappointing decisions by outside officials made that have affected the city – like the failure of a bill that would have paved the way for an Indian casino to open on non-reservation grounds – but he said the current administration isn't working hard enough to seek other projects.

"When you think about it, we could have looked at IKEA, which opened in Canton Township, and I don't even think we went after that here."

There is a catch for Crout, however. If he chooses to seek the mayor's slot, he cannot run for his council seat. All members of the council, the mayor and the clerk and treasurer terms expire next year.

Crout said that's something he will weigh during the next several weeks before announcing a final decision.

"I am thinking about a lot of things right now," he said.

So far, no incumbents or challengers have indicated whether they will or will not seek terms on the council.

Opinion

Neighborhood can be thankful for good news

Officials in the City of Westland are taking the right approach to community improvement.

City council members recently allocated the use of more than $2 million to spruce up the Norwayne neighborhood, a collection of 65-year-old houses in the southern portion of the city.

The funds—which come from the federal government—are part of the nationwide Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), which is designed to make an impact on neighborhoods impacted by foreclosed and abandoned properties. The money will be used to demolish and reconstruct some houses, renovate others and perhaps even provide pocket parks on lots that no longer meet current building criteria.

This recognizes something that can be forgotten in municipalities: sometimes to raise the ceiling you have to bring up the floor.

> *City council members recently allocated the use of more than $2 million to spruce up the Norwayne neighborhood, a collection of 65-year-old houses in the southern portion of the city.*

Work has already taken place to help improve the neighborhood. Earlier this month dozens of volunteers pitched in during the second annual Community Clean Up, in which 115 tons of debris were hauled away with six garbage trucks and 30 dumpsters. Jefferson-Barns and Lincoln elementary schools recently received major upgrades, too, courtesy of the Wayne-Westland Community School District use of sinking fund millage.

It might seem like a no-brainer to spend this money in this neighborhood, and it is. It doesn't mean that the council and administration shouldn't be congratulated on taking advantage of the program and using it to build on previous improvement efforts. The money will help the city inject some community pride in an area that has long lacked it. That sense of community pride might help reduce other issues that tend to come hand-in-hand with low income areas and ultimately mean that the city will have to spend less money on policing there, so that they can better allocate resources. There's also a good chance that this will help cause a domino effect, and encourage people to take more pride in their community in general.

At a time when there is so little to be encouraged about, this is good news indeed.

Project back on track

After the defeat of the bond issue that would have funded the reconstruction of Main Street, members of the downtown Belleville business community said they would work with the city to make the project happen.

So far, so good.

The Belleville Downtown Development Authority (DDA) board, the city council members—along with residents and business owners—are working together, now, to try to get the project off the board next year.

Good.

Input from all these groups will be needed to make this project successful and with as little interruption as possible for the business community.

Aspects of the program they are looking at this time around include the timetable—to try to get it done as quickly as possible, in order to help the businesses and insure the Strawberry Festival can take place on Main Street where it belongs. They also will look at making sure the project will last and how to bring shoppers downtown during the time of lane closures and dust clouds.

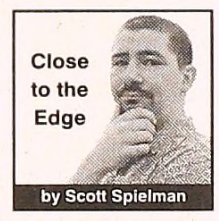
Cost, too, will be a factor and in that the timetable may work against them. The group is working now in order to get a recommendation to the DDA in December. A community forum will be scheduled for the early portion of 2009—the sooner, the better, we hope.

That's because the longer this process goes on, the more expensive it will be. Nothing is getting any cheaper nowadays, despite the soft economy. As the year goes on, it will become more difficult to obtain competitive bids, too, since most companies like to plan their large projects earlier, rather than later.

Still, it is good to see so many different segments of the community getting together to push this project forward. That will only help it win approval from residents, business owners, city officials and potential customers.

This project is too important, and too needed, to put off any longer.

The show's over – now get it done



Those who cared to watch the Nov. 19 Financial Services Committee hearing on the plight of the auto industry were treated to quite a show.

Truly, nobody can grandstand like a congressman under the national spotlight. They proved that last week, grilling the executives of the Big 3 automakers—treating them like beggars, if not outright criminals—for having the audacity to ask for a loan that would, in turn, help them keep jobs alive for millions of Americans.

This was a show all right, because it has to happen and everyone on both sides of the table knows it.

It was also bad public relations all around.

Sure, the executives made a bad choice when they flew their private jets in to ask for this bridge loan. It's no worse than what members of the banking industry did when they asked for their flat out bailout. I would look at that suspiciously, too. I would, in fact, look at it the same way I would look at a request from some fat cat congressman asking little old me for a campaign contribution.

> *They were ill-prepared for the hearing and they had a lot of nerve, I think, in chastising the auto executives for not seeing this crisis coming.*

If the auto executives looked bad with that little maneuver, our national leaders didn't look much better. They were ill-prepared for the hearing and they had a lot of nerve, I think, in chastising the auto executives for not seeing this crisis coming.

Well, didn't they? The federal government has been taking requests for bailouts from just about every other sector of society. They've been sending billions to help 'fix' other countries. They can't authorize a loan to help save ours?

I agree that it's important to see a plan for the money. That's part of showing a fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers. Other the other rhetoric could have been curtailed, even though it would have made for less compelling television. A simple: We realize you're in crisis, but we need a plan would probably have been sufficient.

I'm reminded of a couple of quotes from officials since this issue took the center stage last week. Wayne Mayor Al Haidous—whose city is dependent on the fortunes of Ford Motor Co.—traveled to the capital to testify about that very fact.

"It's not just about the City of Wayne," he said when he returned. "It's about America."

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter characterized the response the auto execs received—compared to their banking counterparts—as pitting Wall Street against Main Street. I agree with that; it doesn't make much sense to bail out the banks if there's nobody left to put any money into them.

Hopefully our leaders have had their fun now. This is something that needs to happen. It's a problem that can only be solved by action, not rhetoric.

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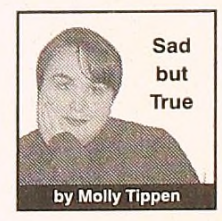
Let's have a little respect



Everyone here at the newspapers has been thinking hard about the situation with Detroit's three automakers, and if anyone else hasn't, they should be.

Most of us who feel inextricably tied to the automakers (that should be all of us who work in Southeast Michigan) are focusing on fault: Whether the management was greedy, whether the union screwed up, and whether drivers are at fault for choosing to buy vehicles from foreign manufacturers.

But what struck me most was the unique style of class warfare the automakers' predicament has brought out, and that it was so apparent on Capitol Hill, where the automakers and a delegation of Michigan lawmakers made their case for a bailout two weeks ago.

I had a chance to catch part of the hearing on C-SPAN, the truest form of journalism, after they actually occurred. Many questions were leveled mostly at United Auto Workers President Ron Gettlefinger about concessions, and about compensation.

To be fair, the CEOs of General Motors, Ford and Chrysler also faced tough questions; mostly about the fact that they flew to Washington DC on private jets.

The tone of the questions leveled at Gettlefinger is what struck me; it was as if to say, why are blue-collar autoworkers compensated in the way they are for what they produce? Why are they worth it?

Why these questions were framed this way resonated with many people.

For a long time now, those of us who work with out heads have looked down – and wrongly so – on those who work with their hands. In the blogsphere, the same point is made over and over: Why didn't they go to college and get an education?

The answer is that those things often aren't in the cards for all of us. Many people are in a situation where they can't pay for an education; they have to hit the workforce right after high school.

As a reporter, I've met young people facing odds that are nearly

See **Respect,** page 6

Respect

FROM PAGE 5

insurmountable: they are from broken homes, their parents aren't working, they are abused or neglected, or they have to earn money to help the family. Go to any alternative high school program, you will hear all of these stories, and more.

These folks used to be accepted into jobs as adults where they could make a living, learn a skill on the job, and gain security. Now, we don't really think about them, or worse, we think less of them.

Once I knew I wanted to work as a reporter, I knew an education was required. I went back to school, mostly part-time. During this period, I worked full-time. To say it was a difficult balancing act would be an understatement. Most of my coworkers experienced their education in the same way.

Manual work is still an important part of the economy. Those who engage in this work need to be compensated. I went to college because I was able. I'm paid mostly for what I learned versus what I can physically handle – but this doesn't make me better than anyone else. The manual laborer shouldn't have to l\try to live on $14 an hour because he took a different path.

This is something many us can't relate to. But we need to start.

The economy is bad enough already here in the rust belt. If we lose any more jobs – even if we feel those jobs aren't of value – the pain will eventually trickle up.

Classified

1. Obituaries

Breitenbeck, Margaret June, November 16, 2008 age 85 of Wayne. Beloved wife of the late James. Dear mother of Pamela (Richard) Conley. Sister of Jack Allen and the late Barbara Begeman and Beverly Willman. Master of "Little Bit". Cremation rites have been accorded. Please visit and post a note of condolence at www.uhtfuneralhome.com

Callegari, Charlie November22,2008 of Wayne. Beloved husband of Martha. Loving father of: Kathryn Lamontagne (Philip), Robert (Wanda Roussell) and Theresa (John Reed). Brother of Louie (Gertrude). Grandfather of Kaitlin, Colin, Coleman, Ava and Ethan. Uncle of Ronald, Michael and Larry. Memorial services ere held at St. Mary Catholic Church in Wayne. Arrangements through the Harry J. Will Funeral Home in Wayne. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the DAV. Harry J. Will Funeral Home, 34567 Michigan Ave., Wayne, MI, #734-721-5600.

June, Ardith M. November 20, 2008 age 82 of Westland. Beloved wife of the late William, dear mother of Roger (Cheryl), Mark, Terry (James) Boguslawski and Annette (Joe) Bennett. Loving grandmother of Sharna (Jay) Woodring, Kristi (Mike) Tedesco, William Kendall, R. Adam Davidson, Denys Kendall and Sarahlin (Andrew) Smith and great grandmother of Jenna Parrot and Alexis and Malachi Davidson. Sister of Bonnie Brady, Peggy Ludwig, Jim Darnell, the late Crystal Evans and Cloris Johnson. Services were held Saturday at the Uht Funeral Home, Westland. Please visit and post a note of condolence at www.uhtfh.com

Overton, Beatrice, November 14, 2008 age 79 of Wayne. Beloved wife of the late Raleigh, dear mother of Brenda (Don) Mitcheltree, Linda (Robert) Manning and Glenda (Dan) Bierman. Grandmother of 12. Also survived by sisters Beverly Kitts and Peggy Tunesi. Services were held at First United Methodist Church of Wayne with Pastor Greg Rowe officiating. Burial was at Parkview Memorial Cemetery in Livonia. Family received friends at the Uht Funeral Home, Westland. Please visit and post a note of condolence at www.uhtfuneralhome.com

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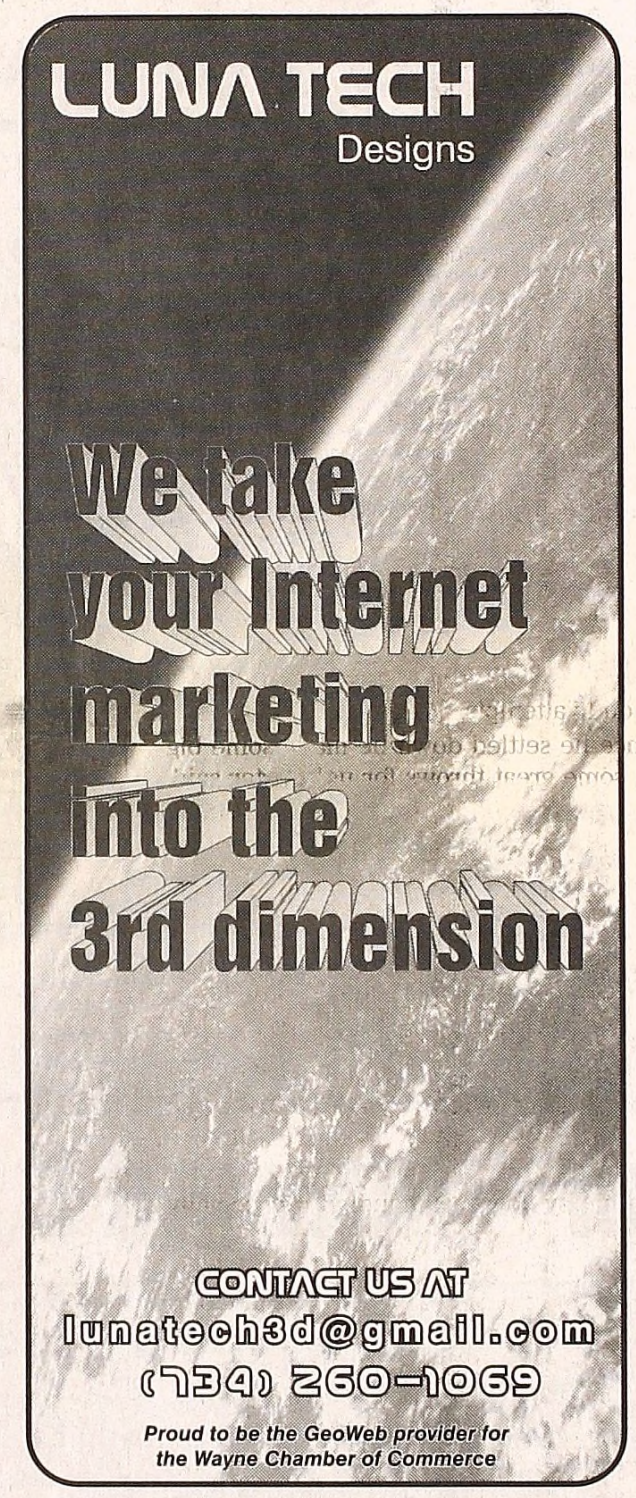

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Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

The road to get to Ford Field for the MHSAA state football championships is a long and winding one where many teams lose their way while others seem to have a GPS unit with the Detroit address permanently imbedded in its memory bank.

The Inkster Vikings fall somewhere in between. The team doesn't have the long legacy of returning to the big stage year after year, but they are no strangers either.

The Vikings will return to Ford Field for the second time in three years after they defeated Bloomfield Hills Lahser in a hard-fought, 36-20, Division 3 semifinal at Birmingham Seaholm High School on Saturday.

"I'm shocked right now," said Cameron Gordon, a senior wide receiver and linebacker. "I've never been here before. But this is why I'm a football player-to win. I want to be a winner."

> *I knew we needed a big play-either offensively or defensively.*
>
> **Cameron Gordon**

Gordon and the rest of the crew will have their chance to be the big winners when they face off against East Grand Rapids for the State Championship at Ford Field in Detroit at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday.

So far this season no job has been too tough for the Vikings. Inkster proved they could handle adversity on Saturday, when they overcame six turnovers to beat the Knights. They nabbed their fair share of Knights turnovers, too. Gordon made a leaping interception with 1:18 left in the game to secure the victory.

"I knew we needed a big play-either offensively or defensively. I told myself that I needed to come up with a big play and I did," he said.

Senior safety Jose McNeal grabbed an interception with five seconds left in the game, but no one shined brighter on defense than senior defensive back Damond Smith. He captured two interceptions and returned one of them 95 yards for a score with 4:27 left in the first half to make it a 14-0 lead.

"On the first one I just made a good read and jumped it," Smith said of the first-quarter turnover. "On the second one we were in zone and saw it tipped up and broke on the ball and took back like 70 yards. I feel awesome.

"This is it," he added. "Everybody wants to play this time of the year and we made it. And we're going to be successful. I feel awesome."

Smith nabbed a third one and returned it for a score in the fourth but a controversial pass interference play called it back. He also broke up three other pass plays and recovered a punt that bounced off a Lahser return man with 9:15 left in the fourth.

"Damond made some great plays," said Inkster Coach Greg Carter. "He's a big-time corner-a great cover guy. He's getting better and better and more comfortable. The further we get into the tournament the more teams are challenging him and getting a chance to show how good of a player he is."

Inkster racked up a 20-7 half-time lead before the Knights came back to knot things up at 20 early in the fourth quarter.

Junior quarterback Devin Gardner connected with junior receiver Jonathan Taylor for 25 yard score. Gordon carried in the two-point conversion for an 8-0 lead with 2:02 remaining in the first quarter.

Gardner connected with Gordon for 52 yard score with 3:57 left in the half for a 20-0 advantage.

Then the Knights mounted their comeback that started with senior running back Tevin Gibson's seven-yard score with 1:44 left in the first half. The momentum carried over in the third when Gibson pounded one in from two yards out to make it a 20-13 game. And senior quarterback Drew Jackson's 23-yard bullet to senior receiver Mike Hafeli evened the score at 20.

Gardner settled things down when he fired a 24-yard shot to Taylor for a score and connected with Gordon for the two-point conversion at 7:29 of the fourth to give the Vikings the lead back, 28-20. Gardner added an eight-yard sneak and Gordon caught the two-point pass to go up, 36-20.

"We knew we had to fight," Gordon said. "We pulled together as a team. Now we'll have to see how things go at Ford Field. I'm going to love it. I'm just going to go out there and enjoy it-it's my last year. I want to go to college as a winner."

Gardner finished 5-of-15 for 121 yards passing and the three scores on the cold and windy afternoon. He added 35 yards rushing and a score on 15 attempts.

"Once he settled down he made some big plays, some great throws for us," Carter said. "He provided some leadership in the huddle when we had some shaky times. That's all we ask our quarterback to do to make sure everyone is a calm and that they make the plays when they're there."

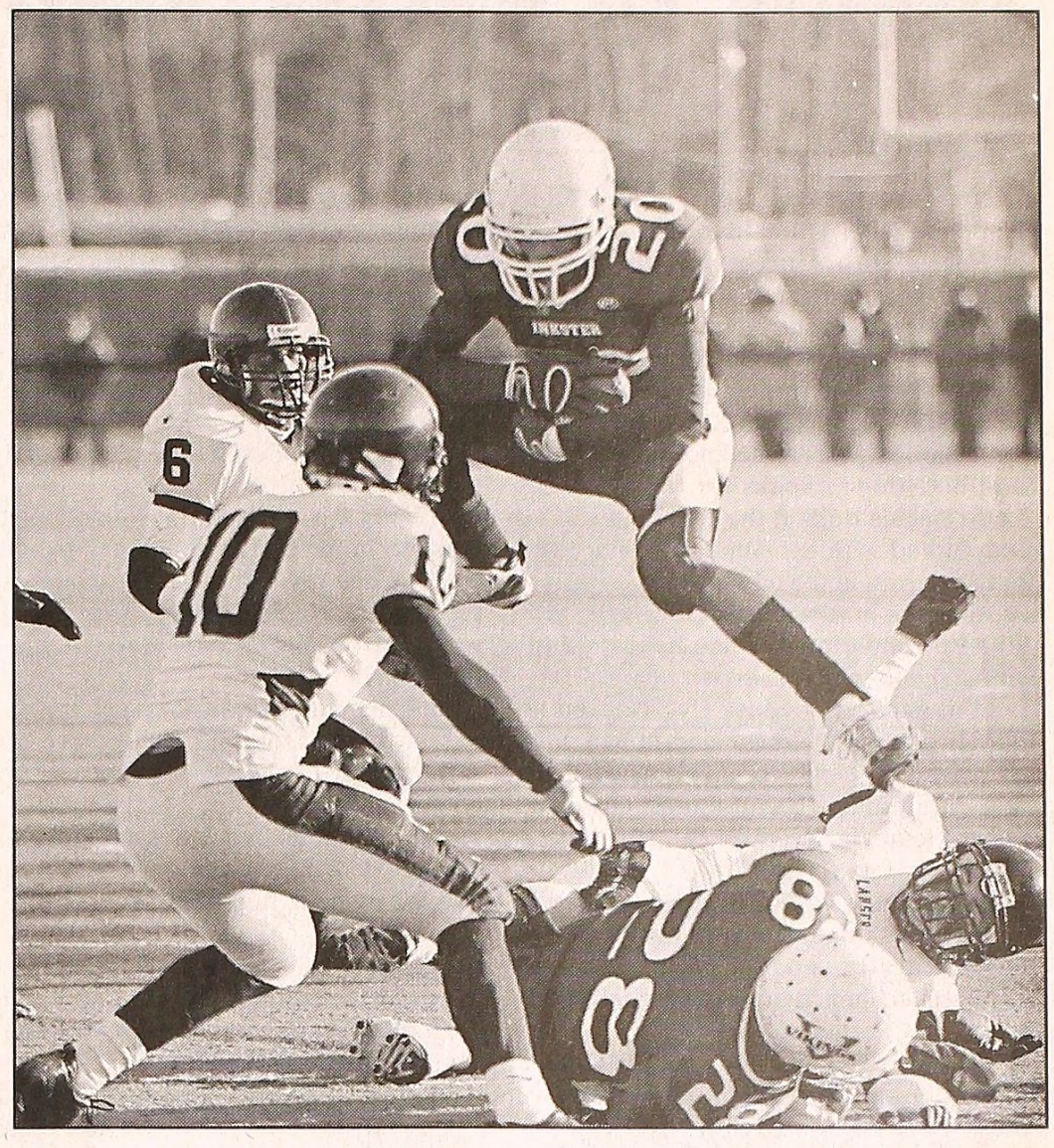
Senior Alan Freeman rushed for 88 yards on eight carries. Senior linebacker Darnell Morris led the defense with 11 tackles and a recovered fumble.

Carter wasn't pleased with the turnovers and costly penalties, but said he was happy to see his team respond to the adversity.

"I'm happy how they handled it especially after the team fought back after a big lead and tied the score up," Carter added. "They showed a lot of poise in hanging in there and getting another lead. We knew we could get some things done offensively. We knew sooner or later we were going to pop some things and we're real happy with the outcome."

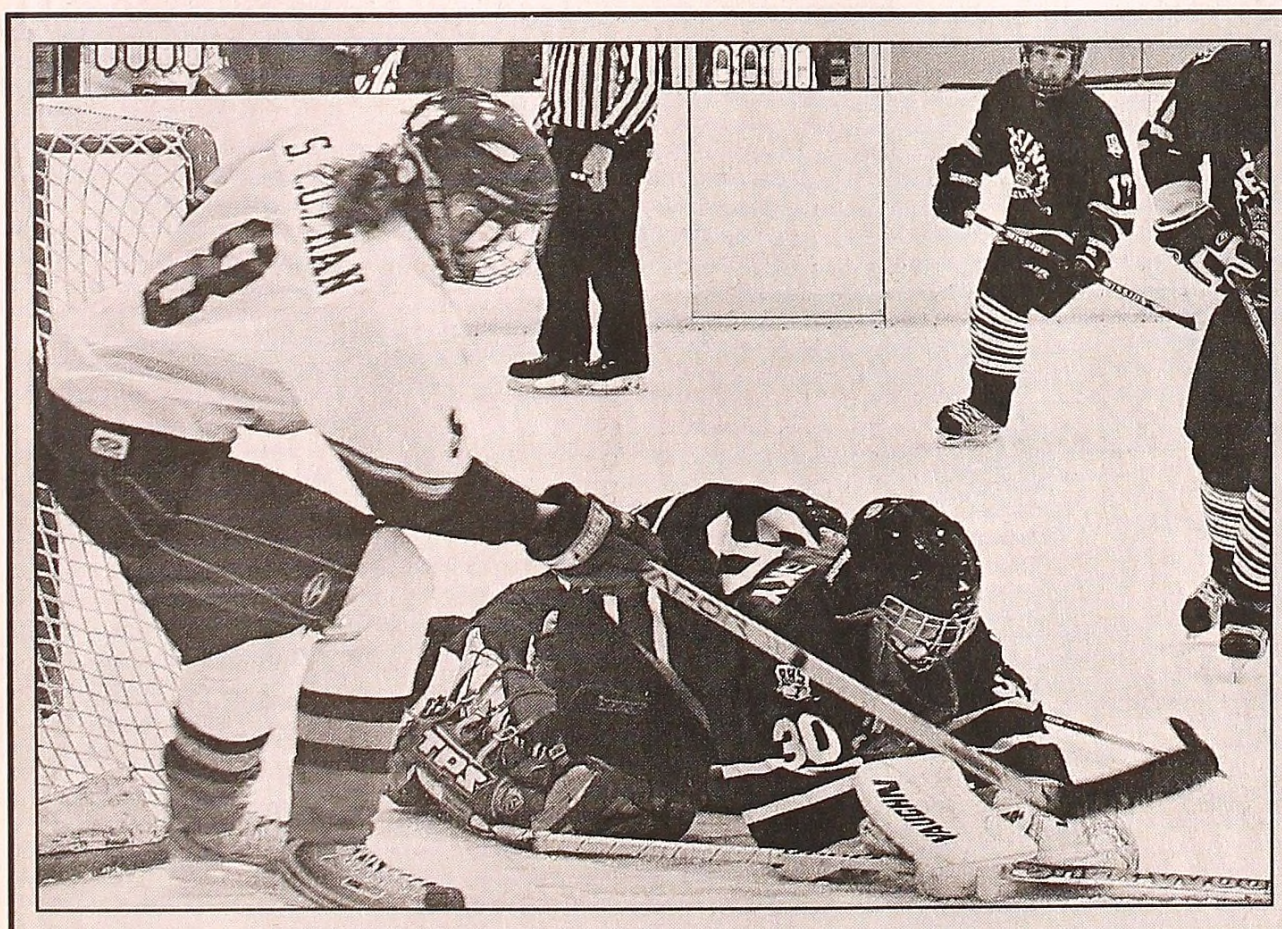
Kick off is scheduled for 7:30 pm on Saturday.

"I'm excited," Carter said. "We'll all have big smiles if we win."



Inkster senior running back Kevin Brown leaps over defenders on Saturday during a Division 3 state semifinal against Bloomfield Hills Lahser at Birmingham Seaholm High School. Inkster won the bout, 36-20, and will play at Ford Field in Detroit for the State Championship at 7:30 pm on Saturday.

Inkster's Donovan Lindsay (24) and Cameron Gordon (4) blast Lahser runner BJ Lavallis, dislodging the ball, during the state semifinal game on Saturday.



Shutout shootout

The PCS Penguins knocked off Regina, 8-0, last in their home opener on Tuesday at the Arctic Edge in Canton Township. Sophomore forward Amanda Heisler scored four goals for the Penguins. Senior Chelsea Osburn scored a goal and added an assist while freshman Ellexus Montoya, sophomore Sarah Coleman and senior Kelsey Nikkila all added single marks. Michelle Shaffer received her first shut out of the regular season and Emily Bullock played wing and defense instead of goalie for the game. "The team played pretty well," said Canton Coach Lori Callahan. "The team is working on playing their own positions, which means they count on their teammates to do their own jobs. This will be important if we want to be competitive against the stronger teams." At left, Sarah Coleman (8) tries to get one by Regina goaltender. At right Kelsey Nikkila (19) moves the puck against Regina defenders. Canton hosts Cranbrook Kingswood at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 2 at the Arctic Edge.

Lady Eagle hitter heads to Ferris State

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

Brianna Grover just signed her National Letter of Intent to play volleyball at Ferris State University and was all smiles while doing so.

The Romulus star is quiet and modest about her achievement off the court, but you would never guess it by watching her performance on it. There, she is a force to be reckoned with as she knocks down kills and bats down blocks for the Romulus Lady Eagles during the fall high school season and with her Michigan Elite team out of Warren in the off-season.

All of the hard work and the decision to give up competitive dance have paid off with a scholarship to Ferris.

"I'm excited because I've worked so hard to get here," Grover said. "I just started playing club only three years ago. I was at a disadvantage because most girls start playing (club) in seventh or eighth grade—I didn't start until ninth."

It's a good thing Grover is a quick learner. As a freshman, she said her Romulus High varsity coach Mike Hunter approached her about playing on a club team.

With the Michigan elite squad, Grover was a teammate with the recently crowned Miss Volleyball, Olivia Kohler, and a runner-up Lindsey Dulude.

"Club (volleyball) makes all the difference," said Monica Hamilton, Grover's beaming mother. "There's no comparison to the level of play at club compared to high school. Through club she plays with the best girls in the state and against the best girls in the state—that's amazing."

Playing in a traveling club league offered Grover a chance to not only see a lot of the country but to be seen by a lot of the country's college and university coaches. She had plenty of offers from schools like Butler, Grand Valley State, Hampton, Howard, North Carolina AT but by the time some of the offers came in she was already set on Ferris.

The decision was easier than one might think.

She wanted good pharmacy program. That narrowed the field tremendously with just more than 90 universities in the country offering such a program. She narrowed that even further when she decided that she wanted to stay within 3-6 hours from home. That criterion left the University of Michigan, Wayne State and Ferris State.

Ferris State offered and she jumped at the opportunity.

"I liked the campus and wanted to stay close to home so that my parents could come to see my games—three hours isn't that bad of a ride," Grover said. "Plus I wanted to be able to come home whenever I felt like it.

"It's very important to me to have my parents there," she said. "They have been with me since I started playing in seventh grade."

Grover admits that it was the club team that helped get her the scholarship but she doesn't dismiss her high school experiences.

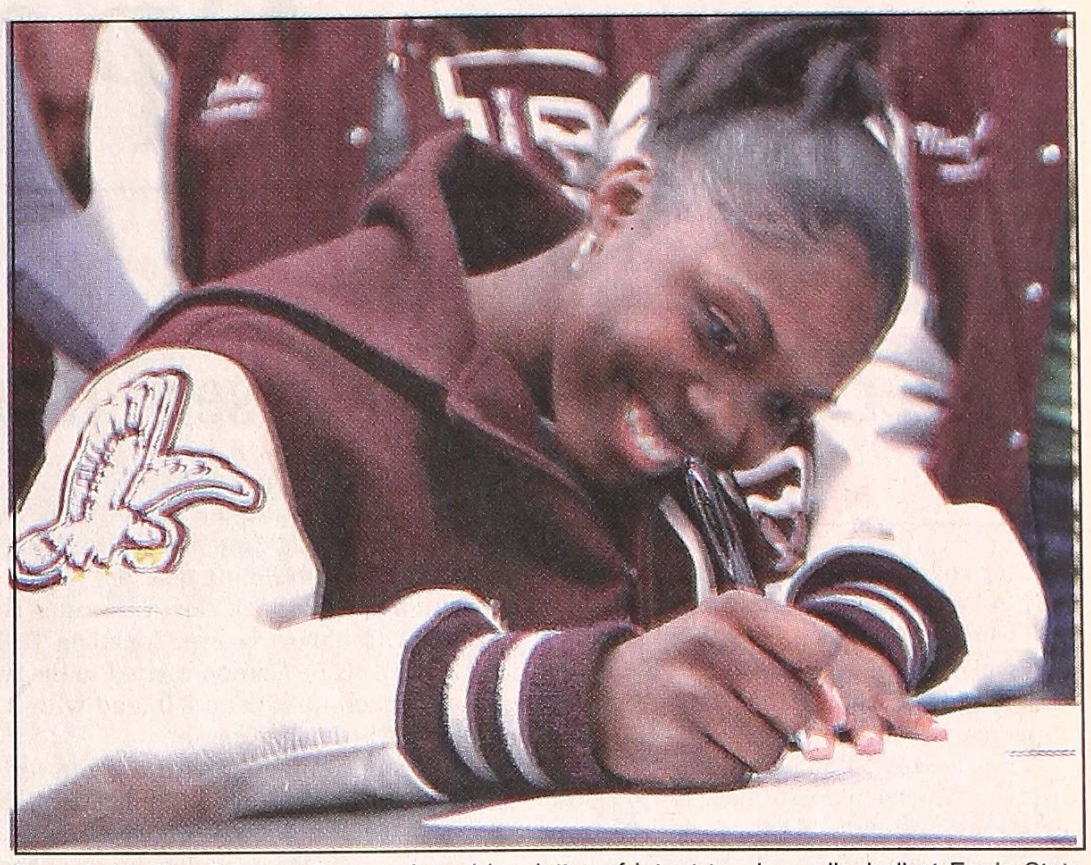
"There were a lot of good memories as a senior like being a captain and helping to lead the team," she said. "It was fun—I love the girls I played with.

She hits, she digs, she jumps and she blocks and she does it all with the grace of a skilled dancer—probably because she is.

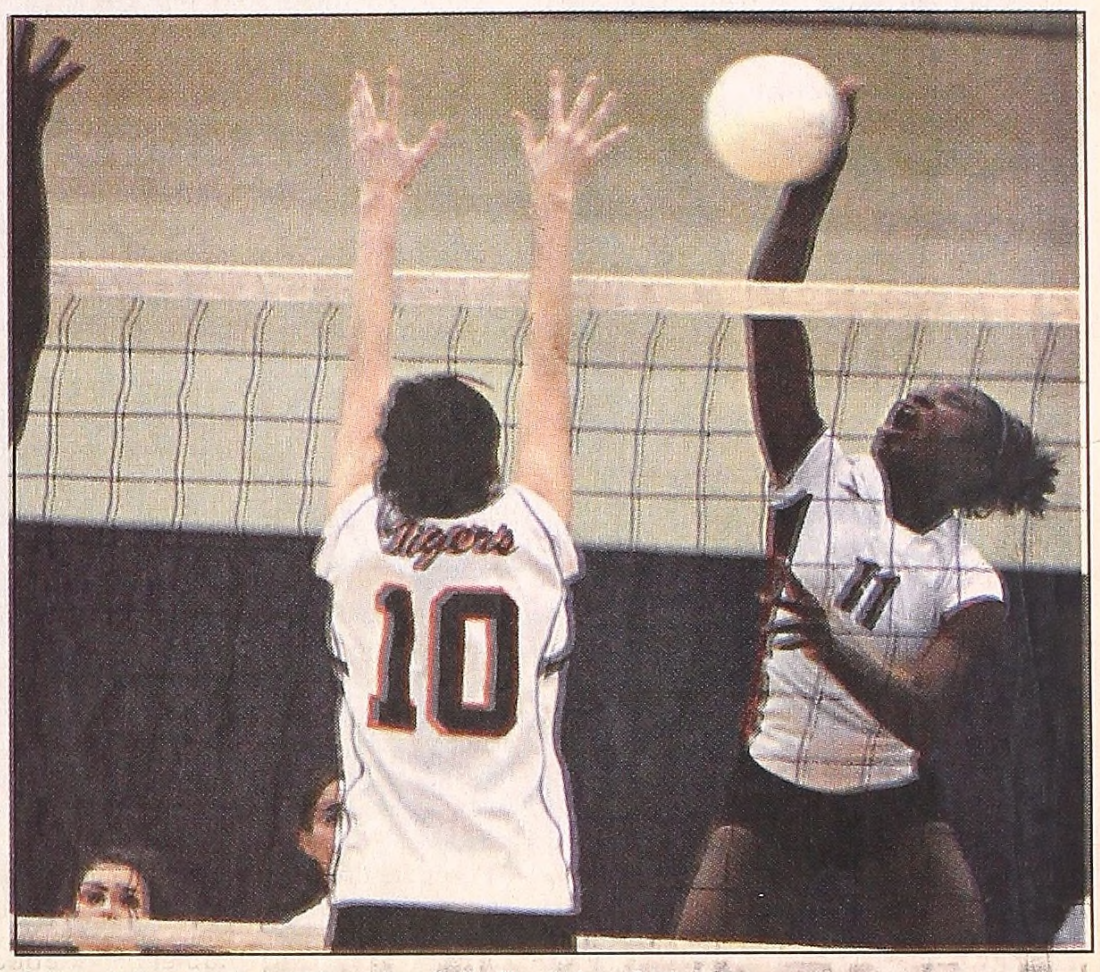
She was a competitive dancer at Dance Connection in Canton Township for eight years. She had made Dance USA National Dance Team two years in a row and competed for a spot to dance in Barcelona, Spain on the international team. The schedule was too hectic come her junior year and she gave up dance for volleyball.

Her mother thinks it was the right choice. Grover heads to Ferris on August 8.

"I'm excited for her," Hamilton said. "She's really worked hard. I never really knew her potential in seventh and eighth grade. But to watch her grow into the player she is today has been amazing. A parent cannot be more proud of a kid."



Romulus spiker Brianna Grover signed her letter of intent to play volleyball at Ferris State University next year.



Grover (11) unleashes a hit against Belleville during district play.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 21, 2008

Supervisor King called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor King, Clerk Payne, Treasurer Budd, Trustee Clair, Trustee Hart and Trustee Jahr. Absent and excused: Trustee Rochowiak. Others in attendance: Planning and Economic Development Director Kelley, Public Safety Director Champagne, Parks and Recreation Director Ross, Planning and Economic Development Deputy Director Swallow, Senior Director Combs, Museum Director Wilson, IT Director Rankin, DPW Director Knepper, Captain Brooks, Captain Laurain, Lieutenant Brooks, Parks Manager Mulkey, Assessing Coordinator Stevenson, Executive Assistant Ireland, Senior Coordinator Jordan, Secretary Cline and an audience of thirty-seven (37).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Payne moved, Clair seconded to approve the agenda as amended to add under New Business #5 "and the reappointment of Robert Cook". Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: Hart moved, Budd seconded to open the public hearing to receive public comment and requests for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programming for the fiscal year 2009-2010. Carried.

Supervisor King opened the public hearing and went to Director Kelley for an explanation. Director Kelley stated this is the first of two public hearings regarding the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The Township is seeking comments from the public for potential projects that would meet the CDBG funding guidelines. The estimated funding level for the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year is $135,000, the same as last year's funding level. The four categories of allocations are as follows: 1) Public Services - used by Parks and Recreation Department and Senior Center Department. 2) Bricks and mortar. 3) Demolition. 4) Planning and administration. Director Kelley stated an additional item for an ADA compliant drop box has been added to the list. Director Ross announced Van Buren Township has received a national award for the CDBG funded, youth services "Takin' It To The Streets" program by the National Recreation and Parks Ethic Minority Society, Inc. There will be a second public hearing on December 2, 2008. Residents are encouraged to submit a written plan and description for possible projects to the Department of Developmental Services by 5:00 p.m. December 2, 2008.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made to close the public hearing.

Jahr moved, Payne seconded to close the public hearing. Carried.

MINUTES: Clair moved, Budd seconded to approve the Work Study Session Minutes of October 20, 2008 as presented. Carried.

Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of October 21, 2008 as presented. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: Supervisor King acknowledged the following new Public Safety employees: police officer David Champagne and fire fighter Christopher Hull.

Yard waste pick-up in Van Buren Township will end the week of November 24th through 28th and will resume the first full week of April.

A correspondence from Museum Director Wilson stating the recent Belleville Harvest Fest held at the Museum and Library was a success.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Hart moved, Jahr seconded to adopt Resolution 2008-45 the new Identity Theft Prevention Policy in accordance with the FACT Act of 2003. Carried.

Budd moved, Jahr seconded to approve the Farming Lease and to authorize the Supervisor and Clerk to execute the Lease. Carried.

Jahr moved, Payne seconded to allow Trustee Clair to abstain from voting on New Business # "Consider approving the Fire Works Proposal by the Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce." Carried.

Payne moved, Budd seconded to approve the Fire Works Proposal by the Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce. Carried.

Jahr moved, Clair seconded to approve the Treasurer's request to extend without penalty the collection of the 2008 winter taxes through Saturday, February 28, 2009. Carried.

Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the appointment of Walter Rochowiak and the reappointment of Robert Cook to the Water and Sewer Commission with terms to expire June 1, 2011. Carried.

VOUCHER LIST: Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the November 18, 2008 voucher list as presented. Carried.

REPORTS: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Township Administrative Offices will be closed on Thursday, November 27th and Friday, November 28th for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Trustee Clair announced the Belleville Community Band holiday concert will be held on December 19th at the Belleville First United Methodist Church.

Director Ross announced the annual 'Holiday Arts and Craft Show' will be held on Saturday, December 6th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Van Buren Township Hall. For more information contact the Recreation Department at 699.8921.

AUDIENCE (Non-Agenda Items): Supervisor – elect White thanked Trustee Rochowiak, Trustee Clair, Clerk Payne and Supervisor King for their years of service on the Township Board with a special thank you to Supervisor King for transitional meetings that have taken place. Supervisor King recognized the Department Directors for their assistance in gathering pertinent information for a smooth transition and wished the new Board of Trustees members well.

Joyce Rochowiak, on behalf of her husband, Trustee Rochowiak stated it was a privilege to serve on the Board of Trustees with Supervisor King.

Lieutenant Brooks, POLC Command Union President, thanked the current Board of Trustees for their working relationship and to the new Board of Trustees is hopeful to continue the same working relationship.

Director Kelley announced he has tendered his resignation effective November 19, 2008 and thanked the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Clair thanked the residents for the opportunity to serve on the Board of Trustees and also thanked the Board of Trustees and township staff.

Clerk Payne stated it has been a pleasure to serve on the Board of Trustees and Van Buren Township over the past 25 years.

Supervisor King acknowledged all of the township employees for the great service they provide to the community and recognized the Department Directors. Supervisor King stated to the current Board of Trustees it has been a privilege to work with them and wished the new Board of Trustees sincere luck. Lastly Supervisor King, thanked her staff Executive Assistant Ireland, Assessing Coordinator Stevenson, Confidential Secretary White, Assessing Clerk Veerkamp and temporary employee Greenhill and also her family.

Trustee Hart stated to the Board of Trustees members leaving you will be missed.

Trustee Jahr stated to the Board of Trustees members leaving it was truly an honor to serve with you all.

Clerk Payne thanked Deputy Clerk Cline.

CLOSED SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Jahr moved, Payne seconded to adjourn at 8:31 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Leon Wright
Township Clerk

Paul White
Supervisor

Publish: November 26, 2008

Young Lady Chiefs ready for season

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

It's not too often that a storied high school athletics program starts a season without a single senior on its varsity roster.

That's the situation that Canton Coach Brian Samulski faces with his girls' varsity basketball team this season. He has five juniors, five sophomores and one freshman, but no—none, nil, zero, zip, zilch, nada—seniors.

Samulski said he hopes that the young team's competitive nature will carry them through the season.

"We are young," he said. "But they're very competitive and hard-working and hate to lose so we're just going to go out there and play and see what happens."

His most experienced players are sophomore forward Kayla Bridges and sophomore guard Melanie Pickert. Both played a full 21-game varsity season with Canton last season.

"It's going to take some time because we are young," Bridges said. "Right now we don't have anyone that is a leader. It's a different experience, not having any seniors. We don't have many leaders to look up to but I guess that's going to be us. We're going to have completely different roles this year, but I think that we are ready for it."

Samulski brought up and entered junior guard Lindsey Winters and junior forward Alyssa Cottrell into the lineup for the last six games last year.

The two juniors hope the team chemistry will help improve on their 6-15 record from last year and put more points on the board—an area where Canton struggled last year.

"We all work really well together and we have good chemistry," Winters said. "We're going to be quicker this year and that will definitely make a difference. We can get down the court to defend more effectively."

"We have to step it up—point blank," added Bridges.

Along with not having seniors the Chiefs won't have a lot of height on the team with Bridges and sophomore twin forwards Sara and Kari Schmitt standing the tallest at 5-foot-10.

"Our athleticism will make up for us not being tall," Cottrell said. "We are definitely going to be more aggressive—we want to win really bad."

Sophomore CarolAnn Sexauer is back in action for the 2008-09 campaign after missing last year with a knee injury. She has a nice shot and will help the team with some much needed scoring.

"I'm looking forward to the experience that I'm going to get this year that I didn't last year," she said about her return. "I'm looking forward to just getting out there and playing as a team."

Without size on their hands the team strategy will get an overhaul. Instead of feeding the ball inside the Lady Chiefs will rely on athleticism and speed to get the job done now.

"This group is very athletic and we're going to push the ball and get out there and run, which is a different look—style," Samulski said. "We don't have a true back-to-the-basket player, which is okay. I'm excited about the new look."

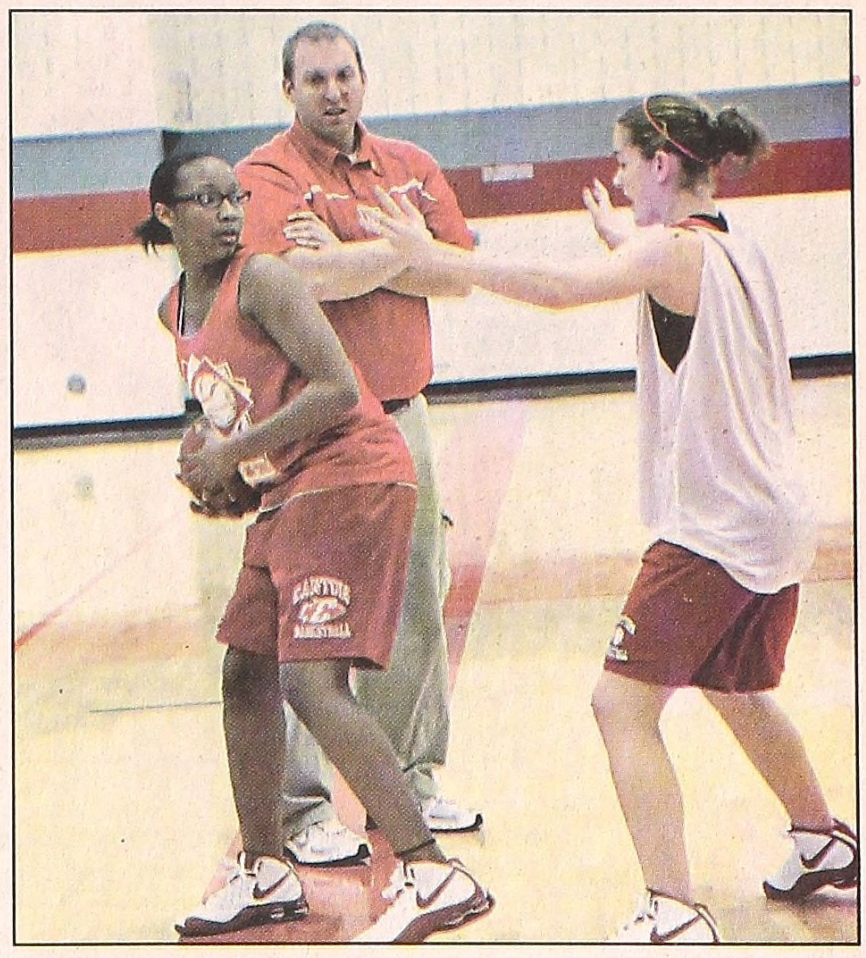
Other juniors include guards Kelly Larimore, Yuki Krolicki and Ciara Williams. Robyn Mack, also a guard, is the lone freshman on the squad.

"Things are looking pretty good right now," Pickert said. "We're definitely going to do a lot better than last year. We're stepping up the intensity and getting ready for this year."

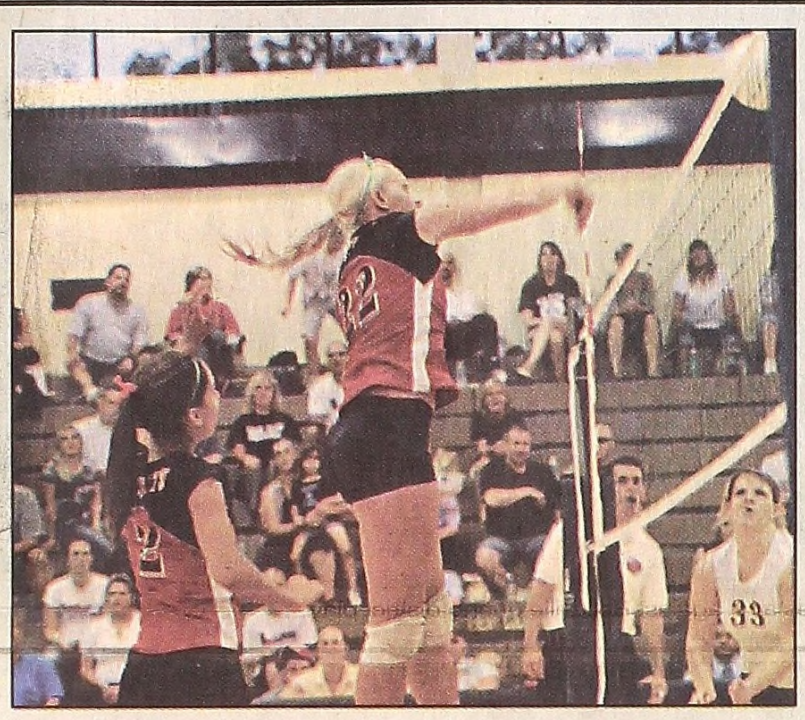
The experience might not be there but the high expectations that are common with Canton basketball still remain.

"We want a winning record and we want to win districts," Sexauer said. "We have the talent and the ability to, we just have to make sure that we can execute."

Canton opens the season at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 2 when the Lady Chiefs host Saline.



Canton Coach Bran Samulski, center, hopes his young team's athleticism and speed can overcome the fact that they have no seniors on the team this season. As a sophomore, Kayla Bridges (left) is one of the few returning players with experience.



All Region stars

Region 18 chose its All Region roster recently and Journal Land players made a goods showing. While most area teams had two players selected to the Class A team, Salem and Canton had three. The Lady Rocks Jansen Falcuson, Nicole Merget (above, 12) and Kelly MacDonald were selected and Canton added Jordan Kielty, Kacy Moran and Kristine Muir. John Glenn senior captains Brittany Holbrook (left) and Stacey Truskowski (right) were honored along with Northville's Shelby Temple and Kelly Maise. Brianna Beyer made it on from Plymouth. In Class D selections, Lutheran Westland ran the table with Rebecca Refenes, Katy Ramthun, Lauren Gieschen and Abi Gieschen. Lutheran Westland Coach Kevin Wade was named Coach of the Year in Class D.

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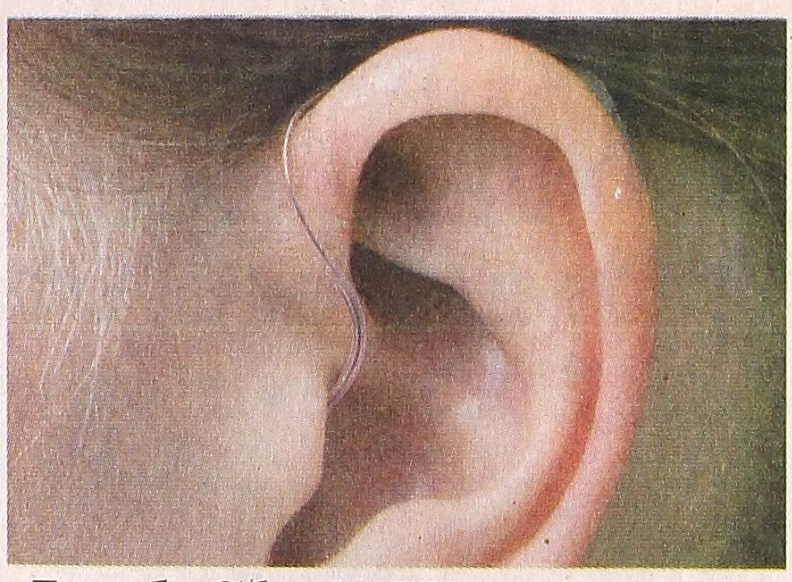

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